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**Date:** 12/14/2016

**GAIN Report Number:**

## Bolivia

**Post:** Lima

### Historic Drought Hits Bolivian Agricultural Production

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

A historic drought in Bolivia is causing water restrictions in households in the capital of La Paz and reducing grain and oilseed production output by 27 percent in 2016. Sources indicate the cause of the drought is a combination of global climate change and cyclical rains. Rains returned to Santa Cruz in early November 2016 and the outlook for the crop season of the summer (January-March) of 2017 is positive. Total planted area is estimated at 1.5 million hectares of which 990,000 hectares is soybeans.

### General Information:

An historic severe drought is affecting Bolivia, causing water restrictions in households in La Paz and other highland areas, as well as crop production. This drought began earlier in the year in the lower elevation areas of the Bolivian agricultural powerhouse Santa Cruz, affecting the winter (June-August) crop season. Sources indicate that Bolivia lost 111,000 hectares and 726,000 MT of grain estimated at \$200 million. The drought not only damages arable land but also reduces yields significantly.

Bolivian agricultural producers lost 27 percent of their winter crop in 2016 compared to the same period in the previous year. The lack of rain also affected pastures and forage production which impacted the livestock sector. Ranchers lost 20,000 head of cattle from January to November of 2016.

Due to the shortfall in production, Bolivia had to import 45,000 MT of corn and 15,000 MT of rice (based on January-October 2016 data) from Argentina. Bolivia has historically been self-sufficient; these imports have triggered concerns among producers who are demanding the government to approve genetically engineered seeds for corn, cotton and sugar cane. Currently Bolivia only allows planting of round up-ready, genetically-modified soybeans.

Winter Crop Affected by Drought					
	Planted Area (Ha)	Lost Area (Ha)	Normal Yield (MT/Ha)	Actual Yield (MT/Ha)	Production (MT)
Soybean	200,750	3,430	2.2	1.70	335,444
Wheat	100,000	15,100	1.7	0.73	61,977
Sunflower	95,700	16,850	1.0	0.67	46,331
Corn	100,000	15,350	3.2	1.38	116,817
Sorghum	225,000	55,920	2.6	1.25	211,350
Chia	17,000	4,050	0.8	0.19	2,461
Total	738,450	110,700			

Source: National Oilseed Producers Association (ANAPO)

Rains returned to Santa Cruz in early November and the outlook for the crop season of the summer (January-March) of 2017 seems positive. Total planted area is estimated at 1.5 million hectares of which 990,000 hectares is soybeans.

Sources indicate the cause of the drought is a combination of global climate change and cyclical rains.